



## Blood Pressure Myths

How many of these myths about high blood pressure do you recognize?

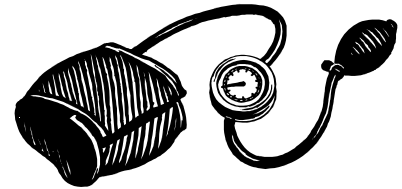
**Myth:** High blood pressure is a common condition that I can live with. I don't need treatment.

**Fact:** High blood pressure, or hypertension, is a serious condition that increases your risk of stroke, heart disease, and kidney failure. Although it usually can't be cured, it can be controlled.

**Myth:** Lifestyle doesn't have that much influence on my blood pressure.

**Fact:** Lifestyle changes are essential if you have high blood pressure. For some people, the following changes may be enough to control the condition:

- Losing weight, if overweight
- Getting at least 30 minutes of exercise, five days a week
- Quitting smoking
- Avoiding alcohol
- Managing stress
- Lowering salt intake
- Eating a healthful diet



If these changes aren't enough, your doctor may recommend medication.

**Myth:** If I take high blood pressure medication, I know I'll have side effects.

**Fact:** Most people on high blood pressure medication do not experience side effects. In any case, don't decrease your dosage or stop taking your medication without consulting your doctor, but do talk with him or her about any unpleasant side effects. It's likely that another medication can be substituted that will work just as well, and without the side effects.

**Myth:** I won't be able to fit pill-taking into my daily routine.

**Fact:** Taking blood pressure medication may be an adjustment, but these tips can help you remember:

- Take your medication at the same time everyday. You may want to take it along with a daily event, such as brushing your teeth.
- Use a pillbox that has the days of the week labeled on it.
- Use a medicine calendar and post reminder notes where you'll see them.

**Myth:** I can tell when my blood pressure is high and adjust my medication accordingly.

**Fact:** High blood pressure, sometimes called the silent killer, usually has no symptoms. Adjusting your medication can be dangerous. Always talk with your doctor first.

Source: UnitedHealthcare

**For more information regarding the TeamHealth Wellness Program, go to the Wellness Website ([teamhealth.com/wellness](http://teamhealth.com/wellness)).**